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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 DHAKA 001180

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/PB, SCA/FO, AND S/CT

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TAGS: PREL PTER PINS PGOV PINR KDEM BG

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR WARNS BANGLADESH INTELLIGENCE HEAD TO  
END FLIRTATION WITH ISLAMIC DEMOCRATIC PARTY

REF: A. DHAKA 1138  
1B. STATE 116638

DHAKA 00001180 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

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11. (S) The Ambassador warned Bangladeshi Director General for Forces Intelligence Golam Mohammad that the U.S. government vehemently opposed the creation of the Islamic Democratic Party (IDP), formed earlier this year by senior members of Harakat ul-Jihad-Islami-Bangladesh (HUJI-B) with DGFI support. The Ambassador expressed shock that the former Director of DGFI/CTIB, Brigadier General A.T.M. Amin had pressed Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina getting her to convince the USG to support the IDP. Mohammad told the Ambassador he was unaware of Amin's actions, apologized profusely and assured the Ambassador that the IDP would not be registered. Mohammad asked the Ambassador and Regional Affairs Counselor for assistance developing a plan to integrate reform-minded HUJI-B members in to the folds of politics and society.

Hasina's Conversations in Washington

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12. (S) On the afternoon of 12 November 2008, the Ambassador met with Director General, Directorate General Forces Intelligence (DGFI), Major General Golam Mohammad and Director, DGFI Counterterrorism Intelligence Bureau (CTIB), Brigadier General Emadul Haque. During the meeting, the Ambassador informed Mohammad of a conversation that had taken place on 30 October in Washington between SCA A/S Boucher and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina regarding the registration of the Islamic Democratic Party (IDP), a group tied to the terrorist organization Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami Bangladesh (HUJI-B) (ref B). During their meeting, Hasina told Boucher that Amin had contacted her requesting that she urge the USG to support the registration of IDP. As Hasina told Boucher and subsequently the Ambassador, she believed IDP members were linked to past attempts to assassinate her and other Awami League leaders. Understandably, Hasina was uncomfortable trumpeting the cause of IDP with the Election Commission (EC) or the USG. Furthermore, Hasina resented Amin's attempts to blackmail her due to his former negotiating role while she was imprisoned. Hasina did not want to see the IDP registered and suspected Amin was acting on his own accord and without the approval of the Caretaker Government or his uniformed superiors.

IDP Registration

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**¶13.** (S) The Ambassador informed Mohammad of a conversation with Bangladesh Chief of Army Staff (CAS) General Moeen Uddin Ahmed on 08 November, which Moeen noted he had interceded to help block IDP's registration. Mohammad agreed when the Ambassador pointed out that Amin's actions appeared to undercut Moeen's efforts. Mohammad speculated that Moeen was likely unaware of Amin's discussions with Hasina and his continued efforts on behalf of IDP. Mohammad profusely apologized for the miscommunication within the Bangladesh Government on this issue and any negative repercussions from Amin's communications with Hasina and her subsequent conversation with Boucher. Mohammad took full responsibility for the lack of coordination and reassured the Ambassador that IDP would not be registered. Mohammad knew IDP had resubmitted a revised constitution to the EC on 11 November in the hopes that the EC would approve the revised documents and register the party. Mohammad reaffirmed that DGFI and the Government of Bangladesh agreed with the Ambassador's assessment of the IDP and promised to speak with the Army Chief and EC to ensure they were not registered.

IDP: Reformed members of HUJI-B?

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**¶14.** (S) The Ambassador reminded Mohammad that a number of IDP members had continuing ties to terrorist groups, specifically HUJI-B. The Ambassador argued that allowing the IDP to continue as a political entity would be a mistake unless the Government of Bangladesh established well-defined conditions. Such condition were akin to "lines in the sand"

DHAKA 00001180 002.2 OF 002

regarding the expectations and tolerance of the Government of Bangladesh with respect to IDP activities.

**¶15.** (S) Mohammad agreed with the Ambassador's argument and explained that he initially supported Amin's theory of bringing HUJI-B members in to the fold through the establishment of IDP or some other type of political organization. Mohammad rationalized that in doing so the Bangladeshi intelligence and security services could monitor and co-opt IDP leaders and arrest those HUJI-B members that remained outside of the political process. Mohammad thought that excluding HUJI-B "reformists", those who would form the core of IDP, from politics could force them back underground. Mohammad admitted that while the theory was sound in practice, the idea of the IDP failed and he now viewed the IDP in the same light as the Ambassador. Mohammad sought the Ambassador's guidance on the best course of action to take with the IDP and other HUJI-B reformers who wanted to take a more moderate stance and integrate themselves in to the Bangladesh political system if establishment of the IDP party was not an option. (Note: we will meet with DGFI in the upcoming weeks to further discuss de-radicalization efforts and other options. End Note).

COMMENT

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**¶16.** (S) We intend to discuss the IDP issue, and highlight Amin's efforts to bypass normal channels to keep the party alive, with the Army Chief during DASD Clad's upcoming visit.

Muhammad and others in the GOB (including the Caretaker Advisers) have all professed shock at Amin's actions and have distanced themselves from his attempts to support the IDP. We will continue to press DGFI and others within the GOB to come up with a better strategy for dealing with HUJI-B.

Moriarty